



Frontispiece. Louis François Roubiliac, *William Hogarth*; bust, plaster modello; ca. 1740 (National Portrait Gallery, London).

HOGARTH

VOLUME 2
HIGH ART AND LOW

1732–1750

Painters and writers speak and writers never mention, in the historical way of any intermediate species of subjects for painting between the sublime and the grotesque.

—Hogarth, "AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES"

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PATRON AND PUBLIC (I)

Paintings and Prints, 1732–1733

A SCENE FROM “THE INDIAN EMPEROR”

A highlight of the social season in which *A Harlot's Progress* appeared was the children's production of Dryden's *Indian Emperor* at the Conduitts' town house in St. George Street, Hanover Square. John Conduitt, a gentleman who had begun his career in the army, married Sir Isaac Newton's niece, Katherine Barton; a genuinely learned man in monetary matters, he assisted Newton in his last years as Master of the Mint and succeeded him on his death in 1727. Mrs. Conduitt, admired in her youth by Swift and capable in later years of disturbing Pope, had good connections and no doubt arranged the party.¹ The center of attraction was the children's performance of Dryden's play, which had been successfully revived in 1731 at Drury Lane. The Conduitts' performance, in March 1731/32, was directed by Drury Lane's Theophilus Cibber; their daughter Kitty played Alibech, Lady Sophia Fermor played Almeria, Lord Lempster Cortez, and Lady Caroline Lennox (daughter of the duke of Richmond and later Henry Fox's wife) Cydaria: all the children were around ten years of age. The audience included the royal children, William, duke of Cumberland, and his sisters the princesses Mary and Louisa, and the daughters of their governess, the countess of Deloraine; among the adults present were the countess of Deloraine, Stephen Poyntz (the duke's governor), and the duke and duchess of Richmond.²

The performance must have pleased the duke of Cumberland, who ordered a repetition before his own family at St. James's Palace, which took place on 27 April. By the 22nd Conduitt had decided to

commemorate the occasion with “a conversation piece drawn by Hogarth of the young People of Quality that acted at his house, and”—the writer, Dr. Alured Clarke, adds—“If he isn’t mistaken hopes to have the honour of the Royal part of the audience in the Picture; and I doubt not the painter’s genius will find out a proper place for Miss C[onduitt].” Conduitt withdrew to his country seat at Cranbury Park, Hampshire, and his friend Thomas Hill kept him informed on the progress of the painting, telling him when Lady Caroline had agreed to sit for Hogarth and, on 29 June, commenting: “Hogarth has but in a manner made a sketch of Lady Caroline. Nothing appears yet to any advantage. The next sitting will, I hope, show something good. I think he has succeeded perfectly well in Miss Kitty’s face and air.”³

Hogarth was in his thirty-fifth year; at the beginning of April he had delivered his *Harlot’s Progress* to subscribers and at the end of May—in the wake of the *Harlot’s* immense success—he and some friends had gone on a raucous “peregrination” to Kent. By the end of April he had accepted Conduitt’s commission. Presumably he attended one of the performances, made a sketch, and then filled in those faces desired from separate sittings like the one recorded for Lady Caroline (figs. 1, 2).⁴ George Vertue records the sitting of the duke of Cumberland, which led also to a full-length portrait (fig. 3) that virtually duplicates the figure in *A Scene from “The Indian Emperor.”*⁵ The canvas was larger than any Hogarth had hitherto attempted—51½ × 57¾ inches (*The Wollaston Family* had been 39 × 49, the *Assembly at Wanstead House* only 25 × 29). It was not finally delivered until 1735.

The children, the focus of attention whether on stage or in the audience, are all fairly visible; but only three of the adults have faces that show.⁶ The woman in profile is probably the duchess of Richmond, and one of the men wearing an order must be the duke. The other figures merely fill in the composition, which is accordingly uncrowded and without the awkward rows of heads all facing the viewer with which Hogarth had filled some of his earlier conversation pictures. The host and hostess are discretely displaced to pictures hanging on the wall, near the mantelpiece bust of Sir Isaac.

The bust of Newton is homage to the Conduitt family patron.⁷ But Newton was also the man who formulated the law of gravity being demonstrated in a small way by the fallen fan the little girl is being commanded by her mother to pick up, and in a more general

way by the natural, fatal attraction being dramatized on the stage. As Thomas Hobbes had shown, love is simply a matter of gravitational forces on moving bodies. Whenever a child does something in a Hogarth conversation, the action is associated with a law of nature such as that of gravity, and an adult, often a parent, attempts to countermand it.

The use in Hogarth’s conversation pictures of paintings and architecture as an integral part of the composition—cognitive as well as formal—had been elaborately confirmed in *A Harlot’s Progress* and suggests the continuing interrelation between his conversations and his “modern moral subjects.” More portrait commissions followed that popular success, and Hogarth must have been busy with these for the remainder of the year. Indeed, in 1732–1733 he painted the most exalted sitters of his career and received a commission to paint a conversation of the royal family. Still, his reputation was primarily for such special subjects as children performing in a play. Conduitt’s choice of artist may have owed something to the particular occasion, which would have recalled Hogarth’s *Beggar’s Opera* paintings (1728–1729): the scene he chose to paint was very similar. The promptbook shows the fourth scene of Act IV, a prison where Cortez is “discovered bound,” and the rival princesses Cydaria and Almeria debate the captive conqueror in much the same manner that Lucy and Polly debated Macheath, who also wore fetters. But here Dryden’s great Cortez and the two princesses, in one of the most heroic of English plays, are being played by children. An audience consisting of their parents and other children is watching these children acting the adult roles of Cortez and the two princesses, both of whom are in love with him. Hogarth is giving Dryden back his scene by way of Gay’s parody of it (and of others—of Antony between Cleopatra and Octavia in *All for Love*, of Alexander between Statira and Roxana in Nathaniel Lee’s *Rival Queens*) in *The Beggar’s Opera*, but with his own parody, this time with the roles played by children rather than criminals. Fielding had produced his parody of the scene in *Tom Thumb* (1730), which Hogarth had illustrated in his frontispiece for the printed edition of 1731 (ill., vol. 1).

Also as in *The Beggar’s Opera*, the audience is played off against the actors. The fathers are talking soberly among themselves, paying little attention to the performance; the mothers and nurses are addressing themselves to the play, except for the one who is ordering her small charge to pick up the fan she has dropped to the floor. The

small spot of disorder in the audience corresponds to the very large one in the moment of maximum tension that is taking place on the stage between Cortez and the two princesses—the same sort of disruption (in this case accidental) to be found in many of Hogarth's earlier conversations—*The Cholmondeley Family* of the same year, for example (ill., vol. 1).

The Cholmondeley children were also set off as if on a stage, and the "audience" was as oblivious as the fathers in the *Indian Emperor* performance. In one way or another the children are always cut off from the rest of the family, and Hogarth likes to show this by bringing together a stuffy audience, a theatrical presentation, and a prison cell: adult reality looks on (or carries on in its own adult way) while children act out their version of what the adults are doing in the context of a kind of incarceration, or—as with the Cholmondeley boys—try to break out. The situation is, of course, a repetition of the first scene of *A Harlot's Progress*, with its "actors" and "audiences," and although there was no longer any child in that adult performance, the young woman from the country retained the child's innocence; her doom was to live out the child's role in an adult world.

A Scene from "The Indian Emperor" ranks with Hogarth's best conversations. It depicts the psychological ties linking various orders of experience: people, social event, stage and scenery; adults, children, and carved putti; guests, players, busts, and painted portraits. In short, the real, feigned (acted), carved, and painted interact within a single painting. And the richness of literary content cannot be dissociated from the effect of the formal elements—the wedge-shaped audience balanced by the children on the stage, itself balanced (as the eye moves up) by the mantelpiece, the bust, and the two portraits, and finally (completing the zigzag path of the viewer's eye), the upper reaches of the stage set.

A MIDNIGHT MODERN CONVERSATION AND SARAH MALCOLM

Despite these painterly commissions, by the autumn of 1732 Hogarth had decided on another large print with which to follow up the

success of the *Harlot's Progress*; too busy to produce a new painting, he turned to a conversation picture he had done a year or so before of a drinking club (ill., vol. 1), titled it *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, added an inscription claiming disingenuously that no portraits were intended, and this time advertised his subscription in the newspapers—a distinct and bold step for a painter relying on a reputation for gentility (fig. 4).

The subscription was announced on 18 December. On 8 December the vintners of London had launched a full-scale attack on Sir Robert Walpole's proposed excise on wine and tobacco, which had become the most controversial issue in the career of the Great Man. The city of London was, to say the least, strongly against the Excise Bill. Hogarth must have dusted off and engraved this particular painting because it showed both tobacco and spirits being consumed with abandon.

In his advertisement of 18 December in the *Daily Advertiser* he emphasized the number of "characters" included (in the manner of his painted "conversations") and his worries about pirates:

MR. Hogarth having engrav'd a large Copper Plate from a Picture of his own painting, representing a Midnight Modern Conversation, consisting of ten different Characters; in order to preserve his Property therein, and prevent the Printsellers from graving base Copies to his Prejudice, proposes to publish it by Subscription on the Terms following.

The Price Five Shillings for each Print, to be paid at the Time of subscribing; for which the Author will give an etch'd Plate, with a Receipt to deliver the Print on the first of March next. But if the Number already printed be sooner subscrib'd for, then the Prints shall be sooner deliver'd, and Notice thereof given in the Papers.

The Picture and Print to be seen next Door to the New Play-house in Covent Garden Piazza, where Subscriptions are taken in.

He not only advertised, he used his own name and gave his address (Rich's new playhouse had just opened). His advertisement was repeated in every issue of the *Daily Advertiser* through December and (with slight changes) January.

By 25 January he had come to another important decision: he deleted the last sentence of the second paragraph and replaced it with "after which Time they will be three Half Crowns each." He had

probably discovered that his method of engraving-etching produced impressions by no means exhausted after some fifteen hundred had been printed. By this time it had occurred to him that he could increase the take by keeping both the profits of his subscription and all subsequent profits; so instead of limiting the printing to those subscribed for, he raised the price after the subscription and sold to the general public.

The painting was a long horizontal canvas of 31 × 64 inches (as opposed to the standard 25 × 30-inch canvas of these years), but he engraved it in the light of *A Harlot's Progress*, compressing the horizontal shape, enlarging the figures in relation to the picture space, and rendering, for such a crowded plate, a relatively balanced composition. Men are leaning back on opposite sides, like supporters on a coat of arms; a clock is balanced by a fireplace; and the two men in the foreground, one leaning back, the other precipitately forward, also balance each other. The bewigged figure is in the center of the table and only slightly off the exact center of the wall paneling. The result is what Pope would have called "harmoniously confused."

Hogarth underlined the vocal aspect of the print in his subscription ticket (fig. 5), which showed a motley group of singers performing the oratorio of *Judith*, singing the words, mock-heroic in this context: "The World shall bow to the Assyrian Throne" (rather like calling a drunken revel a "conversation"). The reason for choosing this particular oratorio, which was scheduled to be performed on 16 February 1732/33 at Lincoln's Inn Fields, can be attributed to Hogarth's friendship with the author, William Huggins; to their shared love of music; perhaps to the more particular fact that Huggins had just purchased the *Beggar's Opera* and *House of Commons Committee* paintings left unclaimed by the ruined Sir Archibald Grant; and to the contrasting harmonies of music and drunken sounds in the ticket and the print.⁸

The great popularity of *A Midnight Modern Conversation*—stimulated in part at least by the Excise Bill—was underlined by the piracies that immediately appeared and the infinite variety of copies and adaptations that followed on everything from snuffboxes and punch bowls to fan mounts. The print was presumably delivered (as promised) on 1 March. By the 12th a piracy had been advertised (*Daily Post*). Salt glaze ware mugs with rough approximations of Hogarth's design were available before the end of March; fan mounts were advertised in the *Daily Journal* for 24 May as sold at Mr. Chenevix's

and other toy shops, with "a Description of each particular Person" attached "for the Entertainment of the Ladies."⁹

Hogarth's interests extended straight down from the dukes and princesses of his conversation pictures to the lowest denizens of the London underworld. While he was conducting the subscription for *A Midnight Modern Conversation* the papers for 5 February 1732/33 published the first accounts of a particularly grisly murder: two old women and their maid were found in their beds with their throats cut from ear to ear. Next day the *Daily Courant* noted that the coroner's inquest had brought in a verdict of willful murder and that four laundresses in the Temple were committed to Newgate for the crime, one confessing and impeaching the other three. Sarah Malcolm, "formerly a Servant to the old Gentlewoman," was named in the *Daily Journal* of the same day, and on Sunday night she was sent to the Compter on suspicion. On Monday she was examined by Sir Richard Brocas, the magistrate, and sent to Newgate. She confessed the murder, which she claimed she committed in conjunction with two Irishmen. "A Silver Tankard, a bloody Apron and Shift were found in a Close-Stool, and two Bundles of Cloaths, in her Master's Chambers, where she had hid them, and 45 Guineas concealed in her Hair."

On 6 February Malcolm was again examined by Brocas and this time confessed that "she and Mary Tracy, together with James and Thomas Alexander, both Brothers, had for some time contrived to rob the Chambers of Mrs. Duncomb"—telling how they had sneaked into the flat, accidentally awakened the maid, and had to murder the women. Malcolm was "remanded to Newgate, with strict Orders for the Keeper not to let any Person have access to her, and to set a Watch over her Day and Night, lest she should make away with herself, she having refused any Sustenance since she had been there." Late Thursday night, the 8th, the coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of willful murder against Malcolm only, refusing to accept her word about accomplices. (She had apparently expected to turn state's evidence and get herself off.)¹⁰

On 21 February was published a pamphlet called *A Full and Particular Account of the barbarous Murders of Mrs. Lydia Duncomb. . . . With a Narrative of the infamous Actions of Sarah Malcolm, now in Newgate for the said Murders*, price 2d, and a second edition with an ac-

count of the trial was out on the 26th. On the 22nd Malcolm was arraigned; she pleaded not guilty, and on the next day she was tried:

after a Trial of about five Hours, the Jury brought her in guilty. She behav'd in a very extraordinary Manner on her Trial, oftentimes requesting the Court for the Witnesses to speak louder, and spoke upwards of half an Hour in her Defence, but in a trifling Manner. She confessed she was guilty of the Robbery, but not of the Murder, only standing on the Stairs.

Her speaking “in a trifling Manner” refers to the most notable aspect of her defense, which was her argument that the blood found on her linen—present on both her inner and outer linen—was menstrual blood and not the blood of the murdered women.

If it is supposed that I kill'd her (i.e., Ann Price) with my Cloaths on, my Apron indeed might be bloody, but how should the Blood come upon my Shift? If I did it in my Shift, how should my Apron be bloody, or the back part of my Shift? And whether I did it dress'd or undress'd, why was not the Neck and Sleeves of my Shift bloody as well as the lower Parts?¹¹

Upon hearing the sentence “she fell into Fits, but being recovered she was a second Time brought to the Bar, and asked if she had any thing to say for herself, to which she answer'd, No.”¹² Subsequently, she declared herself a Roman Catholic and, it was reported, “behaves very penitent and devout, but still denies the Murder; she is removed out of the old condemned Hold into a Room, but one or two Persons are always with her.” On 4 March she attended chapel with the rest of the condemned,

and behaved in a most bold and impudent Manner; she still persisting on her Innocence of being concerned in the Murder, and has given Orders for a Shroud and a Pair of Drawers, which are making, in which Habit she resolves to die; and the Sheriffs of the City of London have given Orders to the City Carpenters for erecting a Gibbet at the End of Fetter-Lane in Fleetstreet, facing Mitre-Court, for her Execution next Wednesday [the 7th].¹³

Besides the scandal of her defense, the most notable facts of her case were her Roman Catholicism and her refusal to confess to the

murder (the confession and penance with which the Ordinary of Newgate's narrative traditionally closed).¹⁴ The contrast between her bloody crime and her youth (she was just twenty-two), sex, and cool behavior after the murders also must have attracted Hogarth. Accompanied by his father-in-law, Sir James Thornhill, he went to Malcolm's cell on the Monday (5 March) before her execution and sketched her portrait. The event was reported by the *Craftsman* (with mention of Thornhill's presence) and the *Daily Advertiser*, which follows its account of Malcolm with: “On Monday last the ingenious Mr. Hogarth made her a Visit, and took down with his Pencil, a very exact Likeness of her, that the Features of so remarkable a Woman may not be unknown to those who could not see her while alive.”¹⁵ It is evident that Hogarth's taking Malcolm's portrait was considered appropriate, this being his public role in the community, and (if the wording is precise) that he sketched her in oils—“pencil” at this time denoting a brush. If so, he may have carried with him to her cell the small canvas that now contains the finished portrait (fig. 6).

Thornhill had established the precedent for such a criminal portrait by a painter of more exalted subjects when (in 1724, perhaps accompanied by Hogarth) he had sketched Jack Sheppard in Newgate and published the portrait in mezzotint. But Sheppard was a robber and escape artist; Malcolm, the murderess, added a new dimension. Hogarth tapped into the growing public interest in murder. Heralded by George Lillo's popular play, *The London Merchant* of 1731, the crime of theft was rendered more dramatic and final by the act of murder. Unlike heresy, blasphemy, or treason, murder called for a treatment somewhere between the religious explanations of the seventeenth century and the psychological explanations of the nineteenth.¹⁶ Hogarth omits reference to the theft, emphasizing Malcolm's bare muscular forearms resting heavily on a table—on which lie her rosary beads—and the prison cell. He balances her figure with the heavy bars of the cell door: the right half of the composition, to which Malcolm turns her gaze, is otherwise empty. According to one story, he supposedly said to Thornhill, “I see by this woman's features, that she is capable of any wickedness.”¹⁷ It is a powerful psychological portrait, and it demonstrates his remarkable fluency in the oil medium.

Malcolm's hanging on 7 March was marked by the same kind of melodrama that characterized Lillo's play, her trial, and her performance in prison. Dressed “in a black Gown, white Apron, Sarsenet

Hood and black Gloves,” she “appeared very serious and devout, crying and wringing her Hands in an extraordinary manner.” Several of the scaffolds constructed for the crowd collapsed, “and several Persons had their Legs and Arms broke, and others most terribly bruised.”¹⁸

All of this contributed to the lively interest in Sarah Malcolm, and in the same newspapers of 8 March that described her death appeared Hogarth’s advertisement:

*On Saturday next [10 March] will be publish’d,
A Print of SARAH MALCOLM, engrav’d by Mr. Hogarth, from a Picture painted by him two Days before her Execution. Price 6d.*

The strength of the painting is dissipated in the etched version (fig. 7). Hogarth emphasizes Malcolm’s face, making her upper body fill the picture space, and omits her beads; the heavy arms are now delicate and rest lightly and rather elegantly on a table that is off to one side. The face is still interesting, but the body might as well have posed for a society portrait.

The advertisement was repeated on the 9th, with the added information that it was “To be sold at Mr. Regnier’s, a Printseller in Newport-street, and at other Print-shops.” Regnier appears to have bought Hogarth’s copperplate. Apparently Hogarth still distinguished at this time between serious modern moral subjects, to be painted, subscribed, and sold at his house, and an ephemeral catch-penny print. The latter, at 6d, was almost as easily sold as a newspaper. Piracies immediately followed, as he must have anticipated. Whether or not he had intended it, the sale of the print was also boosted by the political parallel between Malcolm’s crime, strictly for gain, and Walpole’s Excise Bill: if Jonathan Wild and Walpole were analogous as low to high villains, so too were the murderess Malcolm and the Excise Bill, whose demise (withdrawal) in April was connected by Opposition propagandists with Malcolm’s execution. (Sir James Thornhill had been one of the M.P.s, usually a Walpole supporter, who abstained on the vote of the 10th.)¹⁹

Thus was Hogarth poised uneasily between the world of high society and the lowest depths; at this time he frankly wished to span the two worlds, but whether his patrons would be as willing as the

general public to accept an artist who portrayed both kinds of life, let alone implied a connection between them, was another question.

THE PORTRAITS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

In 1733 Hogarth was commissioned to paint a conversation picture of the royal family and made two compositions to this end, one indoors and the other outdoors.²⁰ The indoor version (14½ × 19¾ inches, fig. 8) is a modello; the larger outdoor version, 25 × 30 inches (incidentally, the size of the *Rake* and the other “progresses” of the 1730s), is possibly the beginning of the agreed-upon painting, blocked out in preparation for sittings (fig. 9). The portrait of the duke of Cumberland is closely related to the figure in *A Scene from “The Indian Emperor.”* The Prince of Wales’s portrait (in the modello) also appears to have been based on a sitting, perhaps related to the faces Hogarth contributed to one of John Wootton’s equestrian group portraits.

Charles Jervas, Principal Painter to George II, had been commissioned to add the faces in the equestrian pictures of Wootton, a successful horse painter but a poor portraitist. When Jervas’s incompetence had become apparent to the king and queen, Hogarth, known for his ability to catch likenesses, had been called in. It is possible that Lord Malpas (now earl of Cholmondeley), who appears in the group and for whom Hogarth had painted a family conversation in 1732 (above, 4), was the moving force. He is mentioned on the bill for Wootton’s painting as its sponsor, perhaps only because payment was made through him as Master of the Horse; but it may be indicative that Hogarth used the same sitting as the basis for Malpas’s face in both pictures.²¹

At this point, riding the crest of his fortune, Hogarth looked forward to the most impressive ceremonial that had yet come within his reach: the marriage of the princess royal and the prince of Orange, which was to take place that autumn. According to Vertue he “made application to some Lady about the Queen that he might have leave to make a draught of the ceremony & chappel & paint it & make a print of it for the public” (3: 68). He was still balancing one patron against the other, trying to have the best of both worlds: he would

make the painting another *Assembly at Wanstead House* (ill., vol. 1) or *Indian Emperor*, only grander, but he would engrave it as well for his popular audience.

Although Vertue specifically says a lady-in-waiting was Hogarth's go-between, one wonders if Lord Hervey was not somewhere involved. A good friend of the duke and duchess of Richmond, an intimate of the queen, Hervey was vice-chamberlain and effectively in charge of the ceremony; four years later he commissioned one of Hogarth's liveliest conversations (fig. 79). Moreover, Hervey, with his deep sense of irony, especially concerning this particular wedding, must instinctively have seen the marriage through Hogarth's eyes. It is hard to imagine what would have resulted if Hogarth had rendered the scene with the fat princess and the deformed prince described by Hervey. He comments that "the faults of [the princess royal's] person were that of being very ill made, though not crooked, and a great propensity to fat." As to the prince of Orange, he

was a less shocking and less ridiculous figure in this pompous procession and at supper than one could naturally have expected such an Aesop, in such trappings and such eminence, to have appeared. He had a long peruke like hair that flowed all over his back, and hid the roundness of it; and as his countenance was not bad there was nothing very strikingly disagreeable but his stature.

But when he was undressed, and came in his nightgown into the room to go to bed, the appearance he made was as indescribable as the astonished countenances of everybody who beheld him. From the make of his brocaded gown, and the make of his back, he looked behind as if he had no head, and before as if he had no neck and no legs.²²

One can almost hear Hervey add the familiar refrain: "had I but the pencil of Hogarth . . ." The situation called for a Hogarth: the princess who, like Jane Austen's Charlotte Lucas, must marry this one or die a maid, and marries with stoic dignity; the prince, deformed but noble and delicate of bearing; the king, appallingly rude, reminding the prince that his sole importance is as son-in-law to the king of England; the Prince of Wales, hating his father and mother and equally despised by them; and all the courtiers fawning on one side or the other. The picture might have been a cross between *Marriage A-la-mode* 1 and the Harlot's wake; but it was doomed from the start.

Hogarth's plans, however bold, ignored one important factor—unless they were indeed based on this knowledge, intending to pre-

cipitate a test of some sort. For the master carpenter, in charge of decorating St. James's Chapel for the ceremony, was none other than William Kent, and the lord chamberlain was Charles Fitzroy, second duke of Grafton. Grafton had already distinguished himself in his office by conferring the laureateship on Colley Cibber: "And Grafton, tow'ring Atlas of the throne, / So well regards a genius like his own," as Tobias Smollett later put it.²³ Kent could claim that Hogarth was impinging upon his prerogative, exactly as Thornhill had done with Kent a few years before; and Grafton, Burlington's son-in-law and one of Kent's most prominent patrons, could claim that Hogarth had gone over his head and wrongfully secured the queen's permission, interfering with his prerogative.²⁴

In October the newspapers were full of the preparations for the wedding. On the 17th it was revealed that "Her Royal Highness' Train is to be borne by four Ladies and two Pages of Honour, to and from the Altar."²⁵ On the 24th a scaffolding erected for the redecoration of the chapel fell down; one man fractured his skull, another broke a leg. The next day the prince of Orange arrived after some delay, and the newspapers followed his every move, though not recording the rudeness of the king and the Prince of Wales or the general awkwardness of the situation. On the 30th Philippe Mercier, now gentleman usher to the princess royal, was painting the pictures of the three eldest princesses, sittings being held every day.²⁶

Newspaper reports, unfortunately, were as close as Hogarth got to the scene. Vertue fills in the details:

when Hogarth came there to begin his draught. he was by M^r Kents interest ordered to desist. Hogarth alledgd the Queens orders. but Ld Chamberlain himself in person insisted upon his being turnd out, and not to persue any such design. at least was deprivd of the oppertunity of persuing it of which, when the Queen had notice. she answerd she had granted such a leave but not reflecting it might be of use or advantage to M^r Kent, which she woud^m interfear with, or any thing to his profit. (3: 68)

This episode may have precipitated the announcement in papers of 6 November stating that the day before "Orders were given by his grace the Duke of Grafton, Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Household, for shutting up the Doors of the Chapel and Gallery, that is preparing for the Marriage of the Princess Royal, by reason of the

great Number of People who come there daily, and hinder the Workmen from their Business.”²⁷

Nor was this the end of Hogarth’s distress: Vertue noted that “Mr Hogarth complains heavily. not only of this usage but of another, he had some time ago begun a picture of all the Royal family in one peice by order the Sketch being made. & the P. William the Duke had sat to him for one. this also has been stopt. so that he can’t proceed.” Vertue’s conclusion should be reproduced in full:

these are sad Mortifications to an Ingenious Man But its the effect of caricatures wch he has heretofore toucht Mr Kent. & diverted the Town. which now he is like to pay for, when he least thought on it. add to that there is some other causes relating to Sr James Thornhill. whose daughter is marryd to Mr Hogarth, and is blended with interest & spirit of opposition—

Hogarth has so far lost the advantage of drawing portraitures from the life that he ownes he has no employment that way. but has mostly encouragement from the subscriptions for those designs of inventions he does.—this prodigious genious of invention characters likeness. so ready is beyond all others. (3: 68)

The second paragraph, before the dash and Vertue’s comment, must reflect Hogarth’s own words, regarding this event as a turning point in his career. Beyond the simple matter of Kent’s prerogative was the increasingly disturbing public reputation of Hogarth himself. One can imagine the duke of Grafton asking the queen: do you want to be immortalized by the author of *A Harlot’s Progress* and the painter of *Sarah Malcolm*? Then one can visualize other commissions and potential commissions falling away: as the crown goes, so goes the court. Still, as Vertue suggests, Hogarth was again working on “those designs of inventions he does”—*A Rake’s Progress* and *Southwark Fair* were under way and he had finished their subscription ticket, *The Laughing Audience*.

2.

PATRON AND PUBLIC (II)

A Rake’s Progress and the Engravers’ Act, 1733–1735

THE HUMOURS OF A FAIR (SOUTHWARK FAIR)

At the other extreme from the royal marriage procession in the Chapel Royal at St. James’s Palace was the procession led by a beautiful but plebeian drummeress advertising a show booth, surrounded by riffraff, beneath the towering booths and signboards of Southwark Fair (fig. 10). An actor in ducal costume, perhaps borrowed from the marriage procession, is being arrested by a bailiff. Even a church is present, and kings played by actors are falling off their rickety stage.

Both the painting and the print were announced finished in early December when Hogarth launched his subscription for what he called *The Fair* (or *The Humours of a Fair*) and a new progress, *A Rake’s Progress* (figs. 13–23); the engraving was delivered to subscribers on 1 January 1733/34.¹ Although the painting was obviously well under way by the time of the events in St. James’s Chapel, it would have appeared significant at the time of the subscription that *The Fair* invokes the topos of *de casibus*, the fall of kings. Very possibly Hogarth was recalling the entries in Swift’s parody of the astrologer Partridge’s *Almanack* (in the *Bickerstaff Papers*, 1709) that juxtaposed the fall of a booth at Bartholomew Fair and the affairs of the kingdom of Poland. But also in his mind was the falling puppet stage in Coypel’s *Don Quixote* illustration (ill., vol. 1) and perhaps also the falling scaffoldings during the execution of Sarah Malcolm. By the time the print was published he and his audience would also have made the association with the collapse of the scaffold in St. James’s

Chapel in preparation for the royal wedding. If *The Fair* started as a low alternative to his royal painting, it ended as a bitter comment on it and the transience of human hopes, whether royal or Hogarthian. Much larger than his “modern moral subjects” (47½ × 59½ inches), it is a magisterial comment on the assemblies and entertainments of the aristocrats which he had been painting. The reverse of *A Scene from “The Indian Emperor”* (of a comparable size), the audience and performers are poor people, whose illusions are harassed and threatened by bailiffs and by the shoddy construction that allows their stage to collapse.

The scene divides into three distinct strata: at bottom moiling humanity, in the middle the dreams and illusions fostered by players and mountebanks, and at the top the church steeple and open sky and, through gaps between buildings, the countryside. The *de casibus* motif is supported by the rope dancers and the rope plunger from the tower of St. George the Martyr (itself destroyed in 1733, not rebuilt until 1734) who invoke a long history of aspiration, success, and failure, including the death in 1732 (28 Sept., *Grub-street Journal*) of one

flying man [who] attempted to fly from Greenwich church; but the rope not being drawn taut enough, it waved with him, and occasioned his hitting his foot against a chimney, and threw him off the same . . . to the ground; whereby he broke his wrist and bruised his head and body in such a desperate manner 'tis thought he cannot recover.

And, as the *Grub-street Journal* (5 Oct. 1732) added, “On Saturday [the 3rd] he died.”

St. George's tower is virtually indistinguishable from the theatrical structures of the stages with their gaudy signboards, and the flying figure shows that it has in fact been preempted as another theatrical locus. The Union Jack also graces the tower, recalling the negative associations of church and state in *Royalty, Episcopacy, and Law*, *The Punishment of Lemuel Gulliver*, and other satiric prints of the 1720s (see vol. 1).

At the left, over the collapsing stage with *The Fall of Bajazet*, is a show cloth Hogarth must have added to the painting in the summer of 1733. In the spring he would have watched with interest the metaphorical fall of Drury Lane Theatre: the old patentees, Cibber, Wilks, and Booth, who had figured in *A Just View of the British Stage*, gradu-

ally slipped out of the picture through death and retirement until a wealthy young man-about-town named John Highmore, who had distinguished himself as an amateur Lothario in *The Fair Penitent* with the Drury Lane company, was discovered to have bought up the patents and to be in control of the theater. His unprofessional and sometimes high-handed management annoyed Theophilus Cibber (also annoyed because his father had sold his share of the patent instead of passing it on to his son), who himself contributed to the unease of the season. One of the controversial pieces which Cibber brought forward, a great money-maker that tided the company over its hard times, was his version of *A Harlot's Progress*. A complete break came in May with Highmore's “occupation” of Drury Lane and Cibber's exodus with almost the whole company for the Little Theatre in the Haymarket.² Hogarth's feelings must have been mixed, but his closest friends were on the loyalists' side. John Ellys represented the widow Wilks's interests and was apparently a friend of Highmore's; Henry Fielding, out of a sense of loyalty to the original theater, continued to work with Highmore—he and the actress Kitty Clive being the only members of importance to do so.

A satiric print by John Laguerre showing both sides poised for battle (fig. 11) was published on 4 July, and by the 27th a play called *The Stage Mutineers* (by Edward Phillips) was being performed at Covent Garden by the gleeful Rich. Laguerre, described in his obituary (1748) as “a facetious companion, universally esteemed in every scene of life,” could afford to satirize both sides of the quarrel: he was Rich's principal scenery painter at Covent Garden.³ Hogarth copied Laguerre's print, with some changes, making it into a large show cloth to hang above Theophilus Cibber's booth. Hogarth's version of *The Stage Mutiny* underlines the Cibber parallel by adding “Pistol^s alive” under Theophilus (noted for his bombastic portrayal of Ancient Pistol) and “Quiet & Snug” under Colley. For his own amusement perhaps, he added a paint pot and brushes near his friend, the painter Ellys. He does not take sides: the preposterous actors on the right are simply balanced by the amateurs—gentlemen and painters—on the left.

The mutiny remained in the air and no doubt contributed to Hogarth's subscriptions. In September and October the ejectment suit against Highmore was played out in Chancery; the affair came to a head in November when Highmore made the mistake of having Harper, one of the rival actors, committed to Bridewell as a vagrant.

Thereafter the papers attacked Highmore and Ellys, compared Harper to Prynne or Sacheverell (depending on their editorial politics), and made much of “liberty.” Harper was freed on 6 December, and by February of the new year Cibber had taken possession of Drury Lane and Highmore sold his shares at a loss. On 1 January 1733/34 the print of *The Fair* had been delivered to subscribers, but it would be another year and a half before *A Rake's Progress* was delivered.⁴

Although Hogarth generalized the setting as *The Fair* in his advertisements, in his later price lists he stipulated *Southwark Fair* rather than Bartholomew Fair, with which he was so much more familiar.⁵ His memories of the latter, and his stored visual impressions, went back to his early youth. At this time, however, two dramatizations of the *Harlot's Progress* (one “with the Diverting Humours of the Yorkshire Waggoner”) were playing at both fairs throughout the season and were still on the boards when he announced his subscription.⁶ It is possible that some particular episode occurred at Southwark Fair—perhaps the story of the drummeress that has come down in legend. Hogarth, who made a separate oil sketch of her, is supposed to have personally intervened between her and a ranting, insolent spectator.⁷ But the most reasonable inference to be drawn from his choice of Southwark is that he was, as Nichols reported, spending his summer months on the Surrey side of the Thames, taking a good look at the Southwark equivalents of his old haunts in Smithfield.⁸ Bartholomew Fair offered him everything that Southwark did, including a church, except for the prospect of countryside and the associations with his marriage (as opposed to his childhood). And this is his first, and virtually only, work that implies something in nature besides the human figure (the beautiful drummeress) as a norm against which the alternatives of hard day-to-day existence and the illusions of the fair are to be judged.

As a pendant, a kind of Vanity Fair, *Southwark Fair* meshes thematically with the conception of the *Rake's Progress* and acts as a prologue, announcing its juxtaposed themes of acting and nature, tightrope walking and falls of various sorts, and including such direct parallels as gambling, an arrest similar to that in Plate 4, and the broadsword fighter of Plate 2. But *Southwark Fair* is also making an assertion about genre that applies to Hogarth's own painting/print: that all of these acts—involving juggling, music, dancing, opera, pantomime, entr'acte, tragedy, comedy—are equally legitimate parts of theatrical representation.

THE LAUGHING (OR PLEASED) AUDIENCE

The subscription ticket, *The Laughing (or Pleased) Audience* (fig. 12), which is announced as ready in the initial advertisement of 9 October 1733, represents not a fair but a conventional theater at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, and not the stage but the audience: the pleased lower orders in the pit, the sour-faced critic in their midst, and the bored gentlemanly fops in the boxes. The orange girls indicate that the theater is also a place of sexual assignation and license; the lure of Venus gets Rakewell—who aspires to be one of those gentlemen—started on his “progress” from Sarah Young to prostitutes and finally a rich old woman.

The Laughing Audience presents a model for Hogarth's idea of his audience. *Boys Peeping at Nature*, the subscription ticket for *A Harlot's Progress*, had in fact focused primarily on the artist—imitating Nature (an adjunct to the subject of social imitation in the series)—and only secondarily on the two audiences implied by the lifting of the veil of allegory. *The Laughing Audience* implies both a wider spectrum and a specifically theatrical model. But it is significant for an understanding of Hogarth's attitudes at this time that he excludes the footmen and rabble who occupied the gallery, to whom he will specifically turn in the late 1740s. As early as his *Beggar's Opera* paintings he had represented actors and audience as interdependent entities drawing on the ancient metaphor of life as theater (*theatrum mundi*). Later in his “Autobiographical Notes” (ca. 1760) he writes that he conceived his characters as “actors who were by Means of certain actions and express[ions] to Exhibit a dumb shew” and constructed his compositions as if in a theater (AN, 209).⁹ Indeed, the passage I have used as epigraph for this volume—“Painters and writers speak and writers never mention, in the historical way of any intermediate species of subjects for painting between the sublime and the grotesque”—is immediately followed in Hogarth's manuscript by: “We will therefore compare subject[s] for painting with those of the stage” (212). Perhaps recalling *The Laughing Audience*, Aaron Hill, in the *Prompter* of 27 February 1736, compared Hogarth's art with the stage in praising him as a reformer; unlike his “rival theatre-managers,” Hogarth gives purpose and propriety to his “dramas.”¹⁰ While the ticket shows the audience (the subscribers), the *Rake's Progress* represents the stage itself. In *Rake 3* the inscription *totus*

mundus on the map being set afire by one of the whores refers not only to the total conflagration of the world but to “All the world’s a stage . . .”

A RAKE’S PROGRESS

If *Southwark Fair* was intended as a step forward in terms of size and scope, *A Rake’s Progress* (figs. 13–23) was another, with eight plates, two more than the *Harlot’s* six. A rake’s progress was so obvious a sequel to a harlot’s that a poem of that title had appeared a month following publication of the *Harlot*; it is not necessary to suppose that Hogarth was inspired by this poem, or that the poet had heard that Hogarth intended to follow his harlot with a rake.¹¹ Hogarth no doubt had read Mary Davys’s popular narrative *The Accomplish’d Rake* (1727) in which the protagonist, Sir John Galliard, is left alone in London: “The first progress he made in modern gallantry was to get into the unimproved conversation of the women of the town, who often took care to drink him up to a pitch of stupidity, the better to qualify him for having his pockets picked.” And Davys sums up Galliard’s “progress,” as she calls it: “His drinking made him sick, his gaming made him poor, his mistresses made him unsound, and his other faults gave him sometimes remorse. . . .”¹²

The rake was the male counterpart of the harlot in the popular picture stories: such series as *Lo Specchio al fin de la Putana* were complemented with *La Vita del Lascivo*, in which the rake was ruined by courtesans (as Tom Rakewell apparently is in Plate 3).¹³ But Rakewell is specifically a middle-class youth who attempts to imitate—or in the *Rake’s* governing metaphor, to “play”—the aristocrat. Hence the first plate establishes his social class and origins, as Hogarth’s earlier series had begun with the *Harlot’s* arrival from the country, and shows him already (his father hardly buried) being fitted with a fashionable suit. Like an aristocratic rake, he has gotten a young woman pregnant and now buys her off; he apes all the latest London fashions, especially wenching and gambling. He therefore assumes various roles, running from “rake” to Paris, Nero, and (in the final plate) a sentimental version of Christ.

But the Rakewell of Plates 2 and 3 recalls the *putana’s* rakish keeper in *Lo Specchio al fin de la Putana* who claimed descent from the em-

perors Claudius and Nerva and was ordering his portrait to join theirs. Rakewell has broken the mirror in which his face is reflected, destroying his own identity, and has cut out the heads of all the Roman emperors along the wall except Nero. He has thus identified himself with (taken on the role of) Nero, the worst of the lot.¹⁴ He is consciously copying those epitomes of aristocratic vice, the Roman emperors, self-styled “gods” portrayed (characteristically) in copies after Titian that hang on the brothel’s walls.

According to Puritan doctrine we must scrub away our own image from the mirror and replace it with Christ’s (an *imitatio Christi*): “We all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image.”¹⁵ Rakewell is conceived in the terms of John Bunyan’s *Grace Abounding* and the spiritual autobiography, where one proceeds in the world surrounded by alternative self-images. Bunyan is constantly aspiring to the role of Christ but also fears that he has assumed the roles of Judas, Peter, or Essau, or a contemporary renegade like Francis Spiro.¹⁶ Hogarth shows his protagonist, far from finding Christ, completely losing himself in his theatrical roles. He recalls rather the masqueraders satirized by Mr. Spectator, the coquettes disguised (like the *Harlot*) as Quakers, whores as fine ladies, or “Rakes in the Habit of *Roman Senators*”: “The Misfortune is, that People dress themselves in what they have a mind to be, and not what they are fit for” (*Spectator* Nos. 8, 14). The reverse of the spiritual autobiography, Hogarth’s “progress” shows the closing off of awareness—or the replacement of rebirth—with mere mimicry, imitation, and masking.

The most blatant of Rakewell’s “roles” is assumed in the final scene, where, stretched out in his death agony on the floor of Bedlam, he is made to recall Caius Gabriel Cibber’s Bedlam figures *Melancholy* and *Raving Madness*; but the composition, including the surrounding figures, would have been recognized as a *Pietà* or a Deposition by anyone familiar with the sorts of pictures collected by Rakewell (figs. 24, 25). (As if he had carried the Christ allusion—Rakewell’s Christ role—a little too far in the painting by showing Rakewell clothed only in a loincloth, Hogarth changed this in the engraving to dark breeches.)

The Rake’s mad assumption of the Christ role is supported by two of the other madmen: one who thinks he is a king and another who thinks he is God. On the latter’s walls are portraits (legible in the engraving) of Athanasius, the fanatical advocate of the Trinitarian

doctrine, and St. Lawrence, whose words “I’m done on this side, you can turn me over now,” recall the gridiron the Rake brought with him to prison in the previous scene (and which, in the context of his two “wives,” may have the same connotations as the gridiron with St. Lawrence over the bridegroom’s head in *Marriage A-la-mode* 1 [below, figs. 90, 91]). These are specifically the mad men who, in Swift’s “Digression on Madness” (in his *Tale of a Tub*, 1704), either succeed in founding new religions and philosophies or are locked up in Bedlam.

There is, however, an equally valid provenance for Rakewell in the new science of aesthetics and connoisseurship as in Puritan conversion doctrine. The second scene begins as another conversation picture—Rakewell with a gardener, musician, dancing master, and jockey (all perhaps portraits); he has already become a collector. The painting above his head is a Judgment of Paris, his personal version of the Judgment of Hercules that informed the consciousness of post-Shaftesburyian connoisseurs and the first plate of *A Harlot’s Progress*. In this scene Rakewell’s options are apparently so many as to make choice impossible; but the painting narrows them down to Minerva, Diana, and Venus, or Wisdom-Chastity versus Pleasure. The third scene shows that he has predictably, aping Paris, chosen Venus and settled into a house of Venuses. As Hogarth retells the story in *The Battle of the Pictures* (1745, fig. 99), Rakewell in the brothel is juxtaposed with a Feast of the Gods.

Shaftesburyian aesthetics posited a civic humanist Man of Taste, the Hercules of Shaftesbury’s *Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules* (1713), the same person Jonathan Richardson proposed when he argued in his *Science of a Connoisseur* (1719) that the function of art in polite society is to be collected and hung on the wall and emulated, with the clear implication that such behavior will raise the individual’s status as well as character.¹⁷ For such a person, in society, Richardson showed, lives among and defines himself or herself in terms of art objects—by the choice of them and later by their proximity.¹⁸ But Hogarth replaces the polite Man of Taste with the Mandevillean egoist, driven by powerful passions which are expressed in his choice of paintings. In practice, we have seen, this is the rake in *Lo Specchio al fin de la Putana* who claims descent from the emperors Claudius and Nerva and has himself painted accordingly. The truth under Shaftesburyian disinterested-

ness and impartiality is revealed to be acquisitiveness, sexual passion, and above all the desire to rise in society. The brutal egoism of Rakewell firms up the model adumbrated in the gentler Hackabout.

Hogarth never valorizes these paintings: the painting of Paris in 2 is as oppressive as the painting of Rakewell’s father in 1, who recalls the “framed” portrait of the Harlot’s model Colonel Charteris in the doorway of *Harlot* 1. These are contrasted with the unframed clergyman, who *should* be her model, and the similarly unframed Sarah Young in *Rake* 1, who in fact “breaks” the frame of the door behind her, which had “framed” Charteris: the difference is that the clergyman was too preoccupied with clerical preferment to help Hackabout while Sarah does succor Rakewell. God Himself is replaced in the Rake’s world by “One G–d one Farinelli,” inscribed on a sheet of paper to indicate society’s equation of art with religion, Paris with Christ, and a fashionable castrato singer with God. In these terms, the sixth scene serves as a parodic Agony in the Garden and the second a Christ in the Temple, who, rather than surprising the learned men with his maturity, learns only how to enjoy himself.¹⁹ Or rather than a Judgment of Paris, possibly in the light of the third scene it is a Temptation by the Things of This World (*totus mundus* again). One may then notice all the crosses suggested by window frames, even by the Rake’s detached queue in the seventh scene, and certainly the juxtaposition of various heads and “glories” or halos: in particular the platter behind the posture woman’s head in 3 and the IHS (*in hoc signo*) emblem behind the bride’s head in 5.

Beneath the paintings are the Harlots and Rakes, capable of choice but limited by the socially accepted, fashionable models painted and affixed above them to the walls, which he or she internalizes. As in the *Harlot*, masking turns into self-enclosure. Rakewell never ventures out of doors except once, and then he has hidden himself inside a sedan chair to get unseen past creditors from his flat to St. James’s Palace, where he hopes to curry a pension but is pulled out into the open air by a beadle. The walls get closer and thicker until in his Fleet Prison cell he is surrounded by prisoners whose attempts to escape extend from wings to alchemy to a proposal for paying the national debt. The Rake’s only escape from his cell is into madness and the chains of that final prison, Bedlam.

Good actions appear only as a natural human (but more often animal) action unconnected with the works of art on the wall. Sarah

Young's charitable actions are such, but they are based on her love of Rakewell, a specific man. We are not shown her carrying out a disinterested act of charity.

SARAH YOUNG

Hogarth must have intended to stress the contrast between the Harlot and the Rake. The marginality of the outcast Hackabout is modified by the example of Rakewell, who, to begin with, is male. He has none of the vulnerabilities of the Harlot except for being in a mild way, like her, an outsider: he is an outsider merely in the sense that his father was a rich merchant while he wants to be a rich gentleman. In the attempt he exploits his father's wealth, a young woman who is in love with him, and an old woman also in love with him. The futility of his attempt to be a gentleman relates him to the Harlot and her futile attempt to be a lady; but the Rake does not stimulate the deep ambivalence felt in the presence of the Harlot largely because of the vulnerability of her position. On the other hand, in *A Rake's Progress*, where there is a male protagonist, there is also a vulnerable female figure, whom the Rake oppresses. The lower-class woman whom he has seduced and buys off in the first scene—whose name we learn is Sarah Young—is in one dimension the marginalized Harlot (as he is a foregrounded Character). But in another dimension she fills the secondary position of the servant woman who remained devoted to the Harlot even after death. In Sarah Hogarth is carrying the Harlot type—the marginal female—over into *A Rake's Progress* but without her centrality or her guilt.²⁰

Looking back at the cast of Hogarth's *Beggar's Opera* paintings we notice that if emotionally the Harlot drew on the sympathetic figure of Polly, structurally she filled the role of Macheath, the parody Hercules, yet with the divided loyalties of both characters. While the Harlot had (in Plate 2) Macheath's problem of too many lovers, in general her loyalties were divided among the country, her past, and the church and the attractions of fashionable London. The main difference, however, was that while Macheath "chose," Polly mediated—rather than chose—between her father and her lover. Polly's mediating function was not, of course, emphasized in the Harlot.

Separate entirely from her was her syphilitic servant woman, whose function was to serve (literally) as a bunter between the Harlot and the external world that was viciously closing in on her.

In *A Rake's Progress*, however, something of Polly the mediator remains in Sarah Young—at least after Plate 1, as she doggedly continues to return. In 4 she mediates, indeed intercedes, between Rakewell and the law, in a pose reminiscent of Polly's but now with religious associations. The oil that overflows the lamplighter's can, which appears to be anointing the Rake's head, recalls such passages as the lines addressed to Doctor Faustus in Marlowe's play: "I see an angel hover o'er thy head, / And with a vial full of precious grace, / Offers to pour the same into thy soul. / Then call for mercy, and avoid despair."²¹ The dripping oil is a metaphorical equivalent of the "angelic" intercession of Sarah—though like Faustus, Rakewell does not repent.

Sarah returns in the background of Rakewell's marriage to the wealthy old woman in 5, carrying his baby, and in 7 she has joined him in his prison cell (but has fainted away). In the final plate she again fulfills her function of intercession, this time specifically in the pose of Mary in a *Pietà*. Within a year of the *Rake's* publication, this figure with its biblical associations has moved to the center of the composition in Hogarth's painting of *The Pool of Bethesda* in St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and she remains central to many pictures that followed. But she was already at the center, contemporaneous with the *Rake*, in its pendant *Southwark Fair*, as the pretty drummeress who visually holds together the disparate elements of the fair.

However, as suggested by her failure to convert the Rake—her collapse in the prison cell, which turns her into yet another of his burdens—Sarah is inefficacious; one critic has remarked, "surely the girl, still faithful to her betrayer, is the maddest creature in Bedlam."²² In the first scene two Rakewell escutcheons—a vice with the motto "Beware"—offer a warning to the world at large concerning both father and son, but they also warn young Rakewell of his own motto—to beware the consequences of his prodigality. The two escutcheons, hanging as they do above the heads of the two women, Sarah and her mother (emphasized by the vertical lines of the door connecting escutcheons with each figure), also warn Rakewell of the consequences of his treatment of the Youngs, who will indeed, like his vice, never let him go, even unto death. In the same way, in 4 the sign "Hodson Saddler" behind Rakewell indicates that he is to be

“saddled” with the results of his extravagance *and* with Sarah Young, who is interceding for him with the bailiffs. Hogarth shows Sarah to be a Good Samaritan in 4 and a ministering Mary in 8, but from Rakewell’s point of view she is both angelic and a grim consequence.

A MARRIAGE CONTRACT

The oil sketch, the same size as the *Rake* canvases, usually called *A Marriage Contract* (fig. 26), must have been made as a first thought for Rakewell’s marriage with the old woman, before Hogarth decided to represent the marriage itself (5).²³ Instead he used the room with its picture collection for Rakewell’s levee (2), replacing the paintings with a Judgment of Paris and two portraits of gamecocks, retaining the crowd of clients in the next room and the jockey with his trophy of a victorious race in the right foreground. It is a scene he mined for later works. He resurrected the contract in *Marriage A-la-mode* 1 (adding a great many more pictures) and the painting of *Ganymede*, the objets d’art with auction lot numbers, and the black slave in 4. He expanded the romantic triangle of the mutilated busts (the younger pair exchanging amorous looks while the older man looks away) into full-length sculptures of Venus, Apollo, and Hercules in the first plate of *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753), and he transformed the unfaithful husband receiving a clandestine note into an unfaithful wife in the second plate.

What he never used were the paintings on the wall above the Rake and his bride: as an ironic comment on the transaction he shows Old Master paintings of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child, a Holy Family, and (the largest, as if the consequence of the sequence) an allegory of the eucharist showing Mary dropping the Christ Child into a hopper that transubstantiates him into coins that are emptied into a priest’s offering plate. (Under the Madonna and Child is a framed painting of a foot, presumably another antique fragment such as the broken heads below.)

The images of the Madonna survive only in the false halo inscribed “IHS” above the old woman’s head in 5 and in the imagery of the live “Madonna,” Sarah Young, in the last four scenes. The antipapist strain, which one sees nowhere else so bluntly expressed in English

art of the time, reappears in *Enthusiasm Delineated* (unpublished, 1759–1760) and, toned down, in *Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism* (1763, both ill., vol. 3). But the concern with the Virgin Mary, the Holy Family, and the Trinity (in the reference to Athanasius in 8) persists as a subtext of Hogarth’s paintings.²⁴

POLITICAL AND PERSONAL REFERENCE

Rakewell’s choice in 2 and 3 recalls the *Beggar’s Opera* paintings and the iconography of Sir Robert Walpole, who hovered between wife and mistress (Molly Skerrett) and has more recently had himself sculpted by Rysbrack to evoke the bust of a Roman emperor.²⁵ But in 1728 Macheath was pardoned; in 1735 Rakewell’s choice of Venus, paralleling Paris’s, leads to a universal conflagration. The blind harpist, Hogarth implies, is present at the burning of the world (*totus mundus*) by a prostitute, much as the blind Homer imagined himself present at Ilium, and as Nero—directly adjacent on the wall—sang the “Sack of Ilium” while Rome burned.²⁶ The fire is materialized in 6, where the gambling house burns, perhaps as the result of the careless handling of another candle, perhaps following the bolt of lightning in 4 (added in a later state); by 8 the fire has focused on Rakewell himself sinking into syphilitic oblivion, “burned out” in body and in brain—the sense of “burning” in *Harlot* 6 when Hackabout’s death was given the same date as the Great Fire of London.

The figurehead on the blind harpist’s instrument is of that other harpist, David. This effigy of the biblical harpist, warrior, and king is placed so as to overlap the frame of Nero’s portrait and their relative size makes the one facing the other appear a David confronting a Goliath; the upward movement of the harp suggests that David is physically challenging the emperor, Hebraic against classical cultures, the musician-poets of the Old Testament against the imperial Roman world and its English simulacrum, political and aesthetic.

The fourth scene is set on St. David’s Day, 1 March, Queen Caroline’s birthday. David in 3 is back to back with the observant Welshman with a leek in his cap in 4. Since the bailiffs are also Welsh, it appears that the first Welshman, whose belligerent stance is echoed by his dog’s, is probably the Rake’s creditor. Here St. David and the

sturdy Welshman serve as context for the effete Englishman on their saint's day trying to celebrate not the birthday of a native saint but of a foreign (German) queen.

The overtones are subtly political, from the familiar anti-Hanoverian sentiment to the acknowledgment of Wales's claims to independence. But David may also carry a personal reference, as it seems to have done in *Harlot 2* (and would later in *Industry and Idleness 6*, below, fig. 119). Hogarth seems to have associated himself with David, perhaps because of their shared relationships with a King Saul and a Michal. In the context of the *Rake* this association serves to distinguish the artist Hogarth from his protagonist Rakewell, as in 2 it pits David against the classical values of Paris, Homer, and Nero. One is associated with independence and integrity, the other with emulation and conformity, Walpolian imperialism and Shaftesburyian aesthetics. But Hogarth may also have intended a wry self-parallel with the Rakewell who unsuccessfully attempts to reach St. James's Palace, where he hopes for royal patronage. The personal allusions focus on 7, where he places Rakewell in the Fleet Prison with his father, Richard Hogarth, and his proposal for paying the national debt.²⁷

THE PAINTING AND THE PRINT

The *Harlot* plates were almost friezelike, and only in the fourth plate did a deeply receding plane appear; most of the scenes of *A Rake's Progress* have deep recessions and give a greater sense of motion, with people restlessly surging from front to back. The compositions are more crowded, with blurred demarcations between planes and less reliance on the frontal plane. The Raphaellesque norm, clearest in the *Hudibras* illustrations, has disappeared. If the *Harlot* still invoked the canons of classical history painting, the *Rake* nods toward northern "merry company" scenes, and in Hogarth's own work descends from *A Midnight Modern Conversation*. (*Southwark Fair* recalls Netherlandish genre paintings of a crowd of small figures before a large architectural background and sky.)

The arrangement of the figures—the surging, in-and-out movement—is, however, clearly related to French rococo. The second scene in particular invokes French models (the French engraver, Louis Gérard Scotin, was hired to engrave it, but as usual Hogarth

was dissatisfied and finished it himself). The reason for the stylistic change may be related to Hogarth's friendship with Hubert François Gravelot, the charismatic advocate of the rococo who arrived in London around 1732, but it also shows his continuing adherence to decorum and suggests that the *Rake's* story is on a slightly lower level than the *Harlot's*. Not Carracci or Raphael now but Lancret, Pater, and Gravelot. The story of a merchant's son who aspires to be an aristocratic rake calls for busier, less-defined shapes than the story of a mad knight errant or even of that cathected young woman the *Harlot*.

Since the paintings of *A Harlot's Progress* were destroyed, only with *A Rake's Progress* is it possible to consider history painting as it appears on the one hand in engraved reproductions and on the other in the paintings themselves. Turning from the austere engravings of the *Rake* to the paintings, it comes as a shock to discover how small (25 × 30 inches) and colorful they are. One would expect an innovator in history painting to maintain the monumental size if not the subject matter. Pieter Aertsen and Frans Snyders, for example, drew attention to their modification of history painting into still life by the size of their canvases. Hogarth begins with very modest paintings (*Southwark Fair* is larger but the scale of the figures remains small) in which, contrary to the impression of the engravings, he produces something close to his conversation pictures but less finished and clearly delineated. While small in size, they are painted with flair, and the viewer's attention is drawn to their color and texture.²⁸

The most telling difference between print and painting is that the relatively clear focus of the print is replaced in the painting by "broken" brushwork and a shifting focus (which critics associated with Rembrandt). Some facets, some costumes, some details are carefully finished and clarified, while other areas (sometimes as important for the story) are vaguely sketched in. On the small scale of *A Rake's Progress* the effect is a Hogarthian version of the rococo, just beginning to show the S and C curves with which he came to decorate his paintings. The clarity of the prints dissolves in the paintings, not only in color but in lack of uniform focus, from sharp features to vague recessions.

The second thing to note is that color functions over the eight canvases of the *Rake*. However they are arranged on a wall, whether in a row or two deep, the viewer is aware of the predominance of earth colors, a single wedge of blue sky appearing in 4, with strug-

gling people emergent from the dark background. The colors relate the Rake, full-length, fully clothed in 1 and the prone, unclothed figure in 8. (We recall the parallel or contrast of colors in the outdoor *Before* and *After* paintings, the pale, aristocratic shape of the young man in the one in contrast to the flushed, disheveled, and collapsed figure in the other [ill., vol. 1].) A certain continuity can be traced in the pale pinkish gray of his suit in 1, the pink of his dressing gown in 2, and the almost obscene flush of his bare skin in 8. More could be said about an individual painting like 8, where the raw pink of the Rake's body is balanced by the refined pink of the fine lady's dress (which recalls the pink of his dressing gown in 2) and is related to the deep red of his keeper's coat.

In general, however, the *Rake* paintings seem to move not by comparison and contrast of colors (let alone by any scheme that corresponds to a temporal or causal progression, from crime to punishment) but by degrees of color concentration. If we take as normative the neutral background color, the underpainting that is itself symbolic of ordinary "colorless" existence, then the emergent bright colors reach a peak of warmth—earth colors into intensely hot reds and yellows—in the brothel. The pinks and reds are building up to the left of it in 2, and in 4 Rakewell is pulled out of a red sedan chair, located at the left side of the canvas, almost as if it were an antechamber to the brothel in 3. Thereafter the scenes get cooler and darker, from the cold, gray-walled church in which the Rake takes his aged bride, to the darkness of the gambling house, prison, and madhouse. The colors locate the peak of pleasure and involvement with the colorful world, and then document the Rake's gradual isolation, until he is merely a spot of flesh or color, laid out almost like a piece of meat in a market, a cool pink that recalls by contrast the warm reds of the brothel (and is picked up, as we shall see, in the Pool of Bethesda painting that followed immediately after). Sarah Young, Rakewell's redemptress, wears a bonnet with a touch of pink and a pink rose in her bosom.

If the difference between color and monochrome is the first important fact about Hogarth as printmaker and painter, whose product was both the engraving and the modello for the engraving, the second is that, faced with the engraver's problem of reversal, he chose to paint his modello in reverse rather than painting it straight and then engraving it in a mirror. While often careless in the painting of such details of reversal as hands and buttons, he was careful to

reverse the general "reading" structure of the design so as to retain the primacy of the print. It seems likely that Hogarth and his print-oriented audience naturally approached visual structures through the conventions of linear-verbal structures, reading—as they wrote—from left to right.²⁹

In the engraving of the first plate (fig. 14) one's eye moves from the objects in the lower left corner denoting miserliness up and into the picture, to the lawyer stealing and Rakewell squandering the miser's estate, and so to the pregnant Sarah Young whose silence the Rake is buying. The sequence in general moves from avarice to prodigality, as Pope moved from Old to Young Cotta in his "Epistle to Bathurst," but also, more particularly, from action to consequence. The movement stresses causality: A produces B produces C.

In the mirror image of the painting (fig. 13), however, one's attention is caught by the group of Rakewell, the pregnant Sarah, and her mother and, moving beyond this group (rather puzzling thus encountered), finds only emptiness at the right. Approaching the picture in this way, one sees everything from Sarah's point of view, which produces a sentimental effect that is quite absent from the print and seriously distorts the import of the whole series. Likewise, in 3 (figs. 17, 18), the print forces one to enter through the figure of the Rake into his story; in the painting the subject is blocked and deferred by the figure of the undressing posture woman: they become competing centers of interest.³⁰

The matter of reversal suggests that Hogarth's prints are more expressive as narrative and didactic structures than his paintings.³¹ But the colors and textures also alter the order of perception, breaking and diffusing the causal pattern into contrasts—between Rake and posture woman, between the Rake's world and the real world. The painting develops independently, more as a genre piece, a simple portrayal of manners, than as a morality.

One is also aware of the sheer exuberance in Hogarth's laying on of paint, as opposed to the outlining and mechanical cross-hatching of the print. In this sordid scene, as in the *Rake* paintings, a sort of romantic glow is conferred on the subject; there is none of the scruffiness of Ostade's paintings of drunken boors. The technique of Hogarth's paintings—his bravura brushwork, his rich and creamy colors—seems to remove the scene from the harsh newsprint reality of the engraving. Even in the grim world of the *Rake*, in scene after scene one is bewitched by the soft, lovely colors and textures and

distracted from the relentless message. In the brothel scene something of Hogarth's grim point is lost as the eye glides from the soft pale greenish coat of the Rake to the rose salmon dress, golden stole, and white gloves and bonnet of the whore next to him. The moral comment made by the color and texture is on the false gentility of these characters, contrasted with their gross actions. But this is a very general point, and in the fourth painting the green and russet of the chairman, the green, gold, and white of the Rake, and the crimson of his leggings and the sedan chair—with the white and russet of the girl—all stimulate a delight in color and form that preoccupies the viewer when (according to the moralist) he should be concerned with other matters.

Such an effect can only detract from a work's moral purpose. Perhaps there is something inherently satiric or moral about the linear, black-and-white medium of the print. (When two viewpoints are diametrically opposed, we describe the situation as black and white.) The vocabulary of printmaking corresponds to that of satire: cut, needle, acid, mordant (the name for etcher's acid), and bite ("the controlled corrosion of metal by acid which is the heart of the etching process").³² Hogarth had not discovered how to *paint* a morality; he had not learned Goya's lesson, that a painting can be ugly. For Hogarth the lace or silk must charm, the female curls or complexion must allure. He had no convention in terms of paint and brushwork to correspond to the shapes of the black-and-white engraving, partly because the shapes themselves were purposely those of ordinary representational art, while Goya's bilious colors and agitated brushwork correspond to his expressionist forms. Hogarth, avoiding the quality he referred to under the general term "caricature," had no expressionist forms. Moreover, Goya tries to show a world gone completely awry, while Hogarth is still presupposing stability, order, and beauty—although sometimes he may question them.

It might be argued that the print presents a satire, a moral and rhetorical structure, and the painting then offers Hogarth the opportunity to flex his muscles as well as elucidate (within the limits of the general composition). He realized the difference that color made, as he realized the effect of reversal. He could have painted straight and reversed his engraving, but, perhaps recognizing that he could achieve greater fluency with the brush than with the burin, he chose to block out the picture backwards and paint it freely, *con amore*, and then draw it carefully on the copperplate. His attitude toward

the painting is therefore curiously ambivalent: it is an end in itself, and yet it is always painted with an eye on the print that will follow. It is seemingly painted to please the artist himself, and also to appeal to a collector-purchaser. Color may have been intended as a bonus, something to make the paintings a more deluxe item than the prints. But chiefly, I suspect, it was important for Hogarth to make this gesture in paint which was beyond and free of the engraving, because it designated him "painter" rather than merely "engraver."

Hogarth, I am sure, felt he was on the side of decorum. His clear demarcation of print and painting complies with the rule that demands sober colors for a sober scene, and with the Poussiniste ranking of drawing over color in history painting. John Elsum formulated the first in his *Art of Painting after the Italian Manner* (1703), when he said of the artist that "in Painting Men that are Old, Philosophers, Poor, Melancholy, and Brave, he must use such Colours as are sad, and deprived of vivacity." Hogarth's own palette is reflected in Elsum's advice: "Rose Colour, Light Green, and Light Yellow, appertain to Virgins, young Men, Harlots &c. Fine and glaring Colours to Buffoons, Scaramouches, Mimicks &c."³³ Of course the same applies to brushstrokes: a solemn subject should not draw attention to its painting with a light, lively touch; a Raphael subject should not be painted by a Venetian. One explanation for his procedure could be found in the precedent of such painters as Thornhill, whose St. Paul's panels are grisaille and figures stand out in full articulation, arranged planimetrically, evoking memories of the Raphael Cartoons. Like Hogarth's engravings, these paintings are black and white; one might say that Hogarth's prints approximate the monochrome of these, as his oil paintings supply the place of Thornhill's loosely painted modelli for the St. Paul series, in bright Venetian colors.

The academic (Poussiniste) view held that drawing was superior to color because its appeal was more purely intellectual, while color appealed to the eye alone. A work that appealed strictly to the mind—if that is accepted as painting's chief aim—would indeed have to avoid distracting colors. Color, John Dryden put it, is "*the Bawd of her Sister, the Design or Drawing: she cloaths, she dresses her up, she paints her, she makes her appear more lovely than naturally she is; she procures for the Design, and makes Lovers for her: For the Design of it self is only so many naked lines.*"³⁴ Thus color can be distracting in history painting, like the fawns and satyrs of the oper-

atic style decried by Steele. Color is what Addison most clearly associated in his *Spectator* papers called "The Pleasures of the Imagination" with his category of the "beautiful," as opposed to the "great," which consists of primary qualities. An advantage of the print over the painting, as Jonathan Richardson noted, is that in the painting "other qualities" such as color and texture "divert, and divide our attention, and perhaps sometimes bias us in their favour throughout," while the print lets us see the master's design and intention "naked."³⁵ A background assumption which may have influenced Hogarth, then, was that color is an additive, apart from the moral being of Nature. In his prints he presented a world of primary qualities where reason "might see light pure, not discolored, refracted, or inflected."³⁶

In one sense then color is a secondary, cosmetic quality, relying on the senses but not inherent in nature itself. Color may be thought of as a projection of the poet's mind, as self-expression or how he sees qua artist, opposed to the black-and-white *real* world of primary qualities in his engravings. In the print the artist is effaced, and form as form is less evident because the print is reproductive to begin with, a copy of a copy: the "idea" is all that remains. The execution, the self-expression, is in the painting. These flourishes produce a picture that is about the print's subject *and* about the artist who shapes and sees reality in this way.

Giampolo Lomazzo and Franciscus Junius, however, connected color, as another tool of rhetoric, directly with the painter's function as orator and poet to teach, delight, and move. Hogarth may, in the early paintings, be reflecting the view that color and light could be used to define reality *or* to move the passions. His flickering chiaroscuro, so much more evident in the paintings than in the prints, may have been intended to bring out the painting's ability to move, as opposed to the print's to be read.³⁷

At bottom, however, the painting and the print expressed different positions for Hogarth the artist. The painting was a graphic equivalent of Pope's satire in which the poet metamorphoses the grossest, lowest contemporary reality into something strangely beautiful, reflecting the genius of the artist who effects the transformation. And the engraving was an equivalent of Swift's plain style which, coldly recounting the most horrific human actions (babies sold for meat and ladies flayed or dismembered), emphasized the horror.

As a final emphasis, Hogarth also added beneath his prints the moralizing verses of his friend (and son of the bishop) John Hoadly. These verses offer their separate, even personal comment on the graphic narrative: they were evidently inspired by the paintings and offered to Hogarth, who accepted them and cut them to fit under the designs. Some years later Hoadly was urging Robert Dodsley to print the complete verses in one of his *Miscellanies*. One reason for printing them, he says, is "that they will be y^e only Copy of mine, of a grave Turn of Thought."³⁸ In effect, however, Hoadly's allegorizing and overt moralizing returned Hogarth's images to the operatic history against which he was reacting, and he never used verses again until he required a clearly moral embroidery for *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane* and *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (1750/51, ill., vol. 3).

In general Hoadly's poem simply draws out one aspect of the plate. In 3 it is the danger of women and wine; in 4 the consequences of rakish behavior in punishment and poverty, the Rake's only recourse being penitence (with a specific reference to Sarah: "Whom he hath wrong'd, & whom betray'd"); in 5 the "shame" of being reduced to marrying an old woman for her "gold"; in 6 the evil of gold; in 7 a *beatus ille* passage contrasting a past well spent with one ill spent leading to prison; and in 8 the terror of madness. Only the first two are of interest: in 2 Hoadly allegorizes the figures of the dancing, music, fencing masters as figures in the train of Prosperity. In 1 he emphasizes the father and his greed: the moral is for fathers to raise their sons in the right way. The verses in this case emphasize the moral, placing an emphasis that in the print itself is subordinate, though it is important in Hogarth's graphic vocabulary that Rake-well's father be embodied in a painting on the wall, the place for symbols of authority and emulation (and shown using the scales of justice to weigh money). It is possible that Hogarth told Hoadly to emphasize the father, but the emphasis could merely reflect Hoadly's own concerns with a powerful and dominant father.

THE ENGRAVERS' ACT

To return to 9 October 1733, the first announcement of Hogarth's new subscription read as follows:

MR. HOGARTH being now engraving nine Copper Plates from Pictures of his own Painting, one of which represents the Humours of a Fair; the other eight, the Progress of a Rake; and to prevent the Publick being imposed upon by base Copies, before he can reap the reasonable Advantage of his own Performance, proposes to publish the Prints by Subscription on the following Terms . . . (emphasis added)

Although, having created his own market and replaced the middleman by a subscription, he was in a much stronger position than the ordinary engraver who was completely at the mercy of the print-sellers' monopoly, Hogarth suffered the double annoyance of seeing large sums of money he felt rightly his still going to other parties, and of seeing wretched copies made of the works he had labored over with such care.

In 1733 a purchaser could go to Philip Overton and obtain prints of the *Harlot's Progress* at 15s, or to Giles King for the authorized copies at 4s; the originals, at a guinea, had been completely expended on subscribers, and Hogarth's contract with them stipulated that no more impressions would be pulled. A copy of *A Midnight Modern Conversation* was available for one shilling, as opposed to five for the original in Hogarth's shop.³⁹

The idea of petitioning Parliament seems to have been Hogarth's—the Engravers' Act has always been called "Hogarth's Act." The evidence for his initiating it is circumstantial but strong. More than anyone else, Hogarth had proved the assumptions upon which the Engravers' Act was to stand, and the treatment he had received from the pirates of *A Harlot's Progress* was probably the immediate stimulus. Thornhill's experience in Commons and his practical advice may have seen Hogarth through the earliest stages of planning. He wrote, or had someone else write, a pamphlet that took the form of a petition to Parliament, and his friend William Huggins served as legal consultant.⁴⁰

Three issues overshadowed the Engravers' Act: the evils of copying, the evils of the printseller, and the artist's right to his property. As early as *A Harlot's Progress* Hogarth had detected the analogy between the emulation of upper-class behavior and the copying of art: both are based on the assumption that the copy is as good as the original.⁴¹ As he lobbied for the act, he thematized copying in *A Rake's Progress*, which is about genuine versus imitation, original ver-

sus copy in the story of the merchant's son who tries to be an aristocratic rake. The vicious mediation of the printseller between artist and consumer was also on his mind, and this may have been recalled, for Hogarth at least, by the benevolent mediation in the *Rake* of Sarah Young. Thus his attention moved from the pirated copy to the original work of art, whose ownership (to follow Locke's discussion of property in his *Second Treatise*) derives from the artist's "labor," as opposed to the mere possession by the collector or dealer of antique sculptures and Old Master paintings and copies gathered (sold, bought).⁴² Hogarth's art embodied the Lockean valuation of labor as self-expression. The objects he makes are, in short, *self*-expressive, virtually an extension of the self. But at the same time these works are per se salable, transferable within a market society. And so with the sense of ownership comes an accompanying anxiety—and, in Hogarth's case, the need for extra assertion.

For Hogarth property meant legal ownership and financial profit, but also, and in some ways as important, the determination of its meaning. The latter he sought to accomplish by creating his own context for his product. This context he created by engraving his paintings, selling the engravings himself, as time passed providing explanations and arranging them according to his own plan in folio collections—and, with the paintings themselves, establishing their setting vis-à-vis a public audience, not a private collector. So long as printsellers could have his designs copied and vended, he did not control the meaning of his product.

The act Hogarth projected was based on the literary copyright act of 1709 (8 Anne, cap. 19), "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning by vesting the Copies of printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of such Copies during the Times therein mentioned." The main provisions were that the copyright of works already published was secure to the present owners (whether authors or booksellers) for twenty-one years; future authors had sole printing rights for fourteen years, which they could assign to another (i.e., a bookseller) for an amount that would appear fair. After the first fourteen years, the copyright returned to the author (if still living) for a second fourteen. Pirates were condemned to forfeit all the offending books and were fined 5s a sheet for every copy found, half going to the Crown, half to the injured author. Thus the author could sell his copyright

outright, or for a single edition, afterward bargaining for new conditions, or he could keep it entirely to himself.⁴³

As Hogarth (or his spokesman) presented the argument in the pamphlet, *The Case of Designers, Engravers, Etchers, &c. stated. In a Letter to a Member of Parliament* (undated, probably 1735), the artists—the designers and original engravers—are “oppress’d by the Tyranny of the Rich” (elsewhere referred to as “the Monopoly of the Rich”): “not the Rich, who are above them; not the Rich of their own Profession; but the Rich of that very Trade which cou’d not subsist without them.” These are the printsellers, who exploit the original designer, his engraver, and the wretched hacks who engrave their cheap copies—those “Men who have all gone through the same Distress in some degree or other; and are now kept Night and Day at Work at miserable Prices, whilst the overgrown Shopkeeper has the main Profit of their Labour.” Moreover, if an independent print-seller “should dare to exceed the stated Price for any Print he should think more valuable than ordinary; Copies are immediately procured by the others, and sold at any Price, in order to suppress such a Rebellion against the Monopoly of the Rich.”

The pamphlet takes the side of the oppressed artist against the monopolistic printsellers. Although never named, Hogarth seems to be the chief example, included among the artists who, like the struggling engraver of 1724, lack “Houses conveniently situated for exposing their Prints to sale” and so must resort to printsellers, and also among those who, like the prosperous entrepreneur of 1735, “have much more advantageous Ways of spending their Time, than in shewing their Prints to their Customers.” Those needing protection are not only the inventive artists like Hogarth, but also “those who take their Designs from Portraits, Paintings, Buildings, Gardens, &c.”—who prove that “the whole Profession is entirely in the Power of the Shopkeeper.”

The pamphlet’s subject, however, is only partly the evil of the exploitive printseller. More important is the “Improvement of the Arts” in England, which can only be brought about if the English artist can receive his just profits and spread his wares and his fame through good engravings (not shabby copies). Then the purchaser too will have a greater choice of prints at a lower price, “for when every one is secure of the Fruits of his own Labour, the Number of Artists will be every Day increasing.” Even the printseller will increase his profits, because he will have a greater range and better

quality of prints to offer as alternatives to the imports from the Continent.

The solution, as the pamphlet argues, is simply to pass a law against one artist’s copying the designs of another. By “copying” is meant a shape-for-shape, distance-for-distance, part-for-part reproduction, with “so many Marks of its being a direct Copy, distinguishable by the most common Eye, that it will be impossible for it not to be discover’d when compared in Court with the Original.” And, the writer states specifically, it is still an actionable copy if the engraver merely adds or subtracts a figure from it when all the others are obviously copied.

It is not certain when the idea of petitioning Parliament first occurred to Hogarth, but the *London Evening Journal*, 2 November 1734, carried the following announcement, which may suggest that the “several additional characters” were part of a tactic to delay publication until a copyright law could be legislated:

MR. HOGARTH hereby gives Notice, that having found it necessary to introduce several additional Characters in his Paintings of the *Rake’s Progress*, he could not get the Prints ready to deliver to his Subscribers at *Michaelmas* last (as he proposed.) But all the Pictures being now entirely finished, may be seen at his House, the *Golden-Head* in *Leicester Fields*, where Subscriptions are taken; and the Prints being in great forwardness, will be finished with all possible Speed, and the Time of Delivery advertised.

The petition presented to the House of Commons was dated 5 February 1734/35, signed by (besides Hogarth) George Vertue, George Lambert (who was now having his landscapes engraved), Isaac Ware, John Pine, Gerard Vandergucht, and Joseph Goupy (who carried with him the influence, such as it was, of the young Prince of Wales). “Artists and Designers of Paintings, Drawings, and Engravers of original Prints, in behalf of themselves, and others” presented the petition in the House

alleging, That the Petitioners, and others, have with great Industry and Expence, severally invented, designed, or engraved, divers Sets of new Pictures and Prints, in Hopes to have reaped the Benefit of such their own Labour, and the Credit thereof; but that divers Printsellers, Printers, and other Persons, both here and abroad, have, of late, too frequently taken the Liberty of copying, printing, and publishing,

great Quantities of base, imperfect, and mean, Copies and Imitations thereof; to the great Detriment of the Petitioners, and such other Artists, and to the Discouragement of Arts and Sciences in this Kingdom: And therefore praying, That Leave may be given for a Bill to be brought into the House, for preventing such Frauds and Abuses for the future, and securing the properties of the Petitioners, as the Laws now in being have preserved the Properties of the Authors of Books; or in such other manner as by the House shall be thought fit.⁴⁴

The petition was referred to a committee to examine and report on it, which met that afternoon in the speaker's chamber. Hogarth was not himself called by the petitioners as a witness, perhaps because he embodied all three parties—painter, engraver, and distributor. The engraver Bernard Baron testified that some hunting pieces he had engraved for Wootton had been “copied by another Person; and that the Copies were sold at a very Low Rate, which hindered the Sale of Mr. Wootton's Originals.” Henry Fletcher testified that he and two others designed and engraved a set of flower prints, which cost them £500; they sold them at two guineas a set, painted in color, but before long they were copied by another and sold for one guinea with color and half that without. Isaac Basire (father of the engraver who later worked for Hogarth) then produced these copies, which had been made by him, presumably at the instigation of a printseller. The committee concluded that the petitioners had proved their allegations and ordered that “Leave be given to bring in a Bill for the Encouragement of the Arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and other Prints, by vesting the Properties thereof in the Inventors and Engravers, during the Time therein to be mentioned.” Their report, read by Sir Edmund Bacon, was presented on 14 February. Bacon, Edward Thompson of York, and John Plumtre of Nottingham were ordered to prepare the bill.

The first reading of the bill took place on 4 March, the second on the 13th, and it was assigned to a committee meeting the same afternoon at five in the speaker's chamber. On 2 April the bill returned from committee with report and amendments, which were read through first and then one by one, the question generally put, and the amendments agreed upon (with some amendments to them). The bill, with amendments, was ingrossed. On 11 April the bill was given its third reading, and the clause assigning Hogarth's friend John Pine a monopoly on the engraving of the House of Lords tapestries

(a project dear to Vertue's heart) was added at this time. It passed and was carried by Sir Edmund Bacon to Lords.⁴⁵ The bill had its first reading in Lords on 15 April, and was returned, approved, to Commons on the 25th.⁴⁶

Sir Robert Walpole could most probably have either stopped or pushed through this bill, which made Hogarth financially independent. It would be dangerous to pursue the symmetry of the Engravers' Act and the Licensing Act of 1737, which we know had Walpole's strong support and effectually cut short Henry Fielding's career on the stage. The evidence of the Walpole Salver (see vol. 1) might suggest that Walpole had bought Hogarth's silence. After the commission of the salver in 1728 Hogarth did in fact cease making overt anti-Walpole satires. But *A Harlot's Progress* showed that by 1732 he was publishing at least indirect references to “Walpolism”—and perhaps in the first plates of *A Rake's Progress* as well.⁴⁷ But only with the passage of the Engravers' Act did he definitively turn his attention away from Walpole. It was following the publication of the *Rake*, one story has it, that the Opposition invited him to draw a “Statesman's Progress,” but he refused.⁴⁸ What is certain is that the act could not have been passed without Walpole's approval and that two members of the Walpole family were on the committee that investigated the petition.⁴⁹ On the other hand, besides engraving the Walpole Salver, Hogarth had already assisted Thornhill in his House of Commons group portrait that featured Walpole, and he painted Walpole's daughter's family in *The Cholmondeley Family* (ill., vol. 1), his son Horace, in the mid-1730s Lord Hervey and other Walpole supporters, and later Sir Edward Walpole.

The act that was passed ensured against unauthorized copies for a period of fourteen years from the date inscribed on each print, and for every print discovered a 5-shilling fine was to be imposed. The effective date given, however, was 25 June, which Hogarth may not have anticipated; to his advertisement for the *Rake* of 3 May he added

N.B. Mr. Hogarth was, and is oblig'd to defer the Publication and Delivery of the abovesaid Prints till the 25th of June next, in order to secure his Property, pursuant to an Act lately passed both Houses of Parliament, now waiting for the Royal Assent, to secure all new invented Prints that shall be publish'd after the 24th of June next, from being copied without Consent of the proprietor, and thereby preventing a scandalous and unjust Custom (hitherto practised with Impunity)

of making and vending base Copies of original Prints, to the manifest Injury of the Author, and the great Discouragement of the Arts of Painting and Engraving.⁵⁰

At this point a piratical printseller put into motion a strategy which Hogarth had evidently not foreseen. A series of agents were employed to enter Hogarth's shop and, from observation of his paintings or prints, produce pirated versions which could be published before Hogarth's and before the act went into effect. These men returned to their employers with a description of what they had seen. The engraver or engravers (the style of the piracies suggests several) then worked by hearsay, from garbled and probably contradictory descriptions, as a police artist does in reconstructing the face of a criminal from eyewitness reports (fig. 15).⁵¹ The engravers must also have been plagued by the necessity for haste. How completely Hogarth transformed the popular lives of the Rake can be seen by comparing the work of the memorial plagiarists: whenever their memories failed they reverted to precisely the traditional iconography from which Hogarth had broken away, and in some cases to motifs from his own *Harlot*.

On 15 May the Engravers' Act received the royal assent.⁵² By the beginning of June the plagiarist engraver had done his work, and the *Daily Advertiser* for the third announced: "Now printing, and in a few days will be publish'd, the Progress of a Rake, exemplified in the Adventures of Ramble Gripe, Esq; Son and Heir of Sir Positive Gripe; curiously design'd and engrav'd by some of the best Artists." The ingenious publishers were the best-known London printsellers, Henry Overton, Thomas and John Bowles, and John King. Hogarth had by this time learned of the trick, and the same day published his notice:

SEVERAL Printsellers who have of late made their chief Gain by unjustly pyrating the Inventions and Designs of ingenious Artists, whereby they have robb'd them of the Benefit of their Labours, being now prohibited such scandalous Practices from the 24th Day of June next, by an Act of Parliament pass'd the last Session, intituled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Arts of Designing, Engraving, Etching, &c.* have resolv'd notwithstanding to continue their injurious Proceedings at least till that Time, and have in a clandestine Manner procured [mean and necessitous—*added on the 7th*] Persons to come to Mr. Wil-

liam Hogarth's House, under Pretence of seeing his RAKES PROGRESS, in order to pyrate the same, and publish base Prints thereof before the Act commences, and even before Mr. Hogarth himself can publish the true ones. This behaviour, and Men who are capable of a Practice so repugnant to Honesty and destructive of Property, are humbly submitted to the Judgment of the Publick, on whose Justice the Person injured relies.

N.B. The Prints of the RAKES PROGRESS, design'd and engrav'd by Mr. William Hogarth, will not be publish'd till after the 24th Day of this Inst. June: And all Prints thereof published before will be an Imposition on the Publick.

Only now did Hogarth decide to have cheap copies made (as he had with the *Harlot*): apparently he had not expected to. In the *London Evening Post*, 17–19 June, he added to his announcement:

Certain Printsellers intending not only to injure Mr. Hogarth in his Property, but also to impose their base Imitations of his RAKES PROGRESS on the Publick, he, in order to prevent such scandalous Practices, and shew the RAKES PROGRESS exactly (which the Imitators of Memory cannot pretend to) is oblig'd to permit his Original Prints to be closely copied, and the said Copies will be published in a few Days, and sold at 2s. 6d. each Set by Tho. Bakewell . . . all persons may safely sell the said Copies without incurring any Penalty for so doing.

The Bakewell copies at 2s 6d were aimed at those buyers who could not afford either the originals at 2 guineas or the piracies at 8s, and were smaller than either of these.

The next issue of the *London Evening Post* (21–24 June) carried only the advertisement; and on the 25th—as the act took effect—the genuine *Rake's Progress* was delivered to subscribers. But four days earlier the *Whitehall Evening Post* announced the Ramble Gripe piracy of the *Rake* as published. Having now seen it, Hogarth repeated his complaint in the *London Daily Post* for 27 June, with angry variations: the piracy is "executed most wretchedly both in Design and Drawing"; and he notes nervously that his own authorized copies will be ready "in a few days." There was, in fact, a delay of six weeks before his copies appeared on 16 August—again showing how late had been his decision to employ Bakewell. Finally, on 19 July (*Craftsman*) he opened the original *Rake's Progress* to the general public:

Pursuant to an Agreement with the Subscribers to the RAKE'S PROGRESS, not to sell them for less than two Guineas each Set after Publication thereof, the said original Prints are to be had at Mr. Hogarth's, at the Golden Head in Leicester-fields, and at Tho. Bakewell's, Print-seller, next Johnson's Court in Fleet-street, where all other Printsellers may be suppli'd.

Next Week will be published,

Copies from the said Prints, with the Consent of Mr. Hogarth, according to the Act of Parliament, which will be sold at 2s. 6d. each Sett, with the usual Allowance to all dealers in Town and Country; and that the Publick may not be impos'd on, at the Bottom of each Print will be inserted these Words, viz. Publish'd with the Consent of Mr. William Hogarth, by Tho. Bakewell, according to Act of Parliament.

N.B. Any Person that shall sell any other Copies, or Imitations of the said Prints, will incur the Penalties in the late Act of Parliament, and be prosecuted for the same.

Hogarth has now established his practice: after the subscription, the prints can be bought at a higher price; and they can also be had "with the usual Allowance" by other print dealers.

Either the Engravers' Copyright Act worked better than the writers', or was easier to enforce, or many pirated prints have vanished. The only ones that can be cited with any certainty are Dublin copies. The exceptions were in the cheap "popular" prints such as the portraits of Lovat and Wilkes, when copies appeared everywhere—in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in newspapers, and as frontispieces to various pamphlets and books.⁵³

The act, of course, presumed that a pirate would have little interest in copying a fourteen-year-old print. This was to underestimate, however, the continuing popularity of Hogarth's engravings, the copyrights of which began to expire in 1750. He apparently made no complaints in the 1750s, and indeed around 1754 he issued a print in celebration of the act's success in advancing English arts and industry, but at his death his widow noticed the damaging effect of piracies on her sales, and in 1767 the act was revised to extend protection to twenty-eight years from date of publication. For Jane Hogarth, protection was extended for another twenty years.⁵⁴

Vertue's description of the engraver's sad lot, written long after the Engravers' Act was passed, shows that in the long run only unusual cases such as Hogarth's were materially benefited by the act; most

engravers were still weighed down by handicaps. Dealers may have been forced to offer more advantageous terms to artists, but the ordinary copyist engraver, who might be underbid by another copyist of the same unprotected subject, still had to rely on a patron who owned the work in question and allowed only him to engrave it—and even then his copy could be copied by other engravers, since it was technically not covered by the provisions of the act. In Vertue's own case the act left a bitter taste: it was he who suffered by John Pine's special permission to engrave the Armada tapestries in the House of Lords. If he blamed Hogarth it might explain something of the growing asperity of his remarks over the years, especially his emphasis on Hogarth the intriguer; he is silent on the subject of the act itself, as important as it was to the history he was writing. While Hogarth became increasingly independent as an engraver, Vertue continued to survive largely through personal patronage.

Hogarth's income at this time can be measured against a country parson's (Parson Adams's) of £23 a year with a wife and six children to support, or Joseph Andrews's as a footman, of £8 a year. Actors' top wages were £200 or £250 for a season. Whereas Hogarth's profits in 1731–1732 for the *Harlot* subscription were over £1500, almost all clear, plus the frontispieces and conversation pictures he was executing at the same time. In 1733–1734 his income from *A Midnight Modern Conversation*, *Sarah Malcolm*, and the *Rake* subscription must have been equal to that of 1732. And by 1735, with the Engravers' Act, he was secure and could live off the continuing sales of old prints as well as new subscriptions and topical prints.

As Hogarth's advertisements show, one way to replace personal patronage (a way that had been broached by Salvator Rosa and one or two other artists) was by reaching a more extended public through self-advertising, and, as Vertue's acid comments remind us, Hogarth had a genius for strategies of publicity.

As his rift with the aristocratic patrons grew, the broad permanent basis of his reputation was established. Mrs. Lidell, living in the north country, wrote in 1736: "We never had a duller season, ye Gunpowder Plot against Law and Equity has been ye only subject of late and all allow the scene of confusion amongst the Gentlemen of the Gown was droll. I could like to see it represented by Hogart." In December 1735 Robert Ellison remarked that his lodgings in Cannongate resembled the Harlot's, and a *Grub-street Journal* of 1735/36

remarked: "Fame, the Hogarth of every age, can paint it an image of human life; yet still the grotesque figures create us mirth, and the distant resemblance to truth an agreeable astonishment."⁵⁵ Hogarth would probably not have appreciated the *Journal's* condescension; however, it shows his name passing into common usage. The "celebrated" or "ingenious" Mr. Hogarth, unsurpassed "in his way" ("the first Painter in England, perhaps in the world, in his Way"),⁵⁶ to whom writers refer thereafter is essentially the Hogarth of the *Harlot* and the *Rake*, and of "Hogarth's Act." By 1740 the author of *Satirical and Panegyric Instructions to Mr. William Hogarth, Painter, on Admiral Vernon's Taking Porto Bello* was calling upon Hogarth to paint a picture of this affair, and in the same year William Somerville dedicated his burlesque poem *Hobbinol, or the Rural Games* to Hogarth, "being the greatest Master in the Burlesque Way." Hogarth's province, Somerville writes, is the town, while his own will be the country, but they will agree "to make Vice and Folly the Object of our Ridicule; and we cannot fail to be of some service to Mankind." For the general audience of print buyers Hogarth's name was by now proverbial.

But in 1736 Hogarth received a compliment he must have cherished above all others. It was the madhouse as a metaphor for society in *Rake 8* that led Jonathan Swift, Hogarth's original inspiration for the scene, to end his poem "The Legion Club," a tour of the Irish House of Commons as if it were a madhouse, with this invocation:

How I want thee, humorous *Hogarth*?
 Thou I hear, a pleasant Rogue art;
 Were but you and I acquainted,
 Every Monster should be painted;
 You should try your graving Tools
 On this odious Group of Fools;
 Draw the Beasts as I describe 'em,
 Form their Features, while I gibe them;
 Draw them like, for I assure you,
 You will need no *Car'atura*;
 Draw them so that we may trace
 All the Soul in every Face. (ll. 219–30)

Plate 8 is Hogarth's most Swiftean image. When he began to collect his prints in folios, he sent Swift one, and in 1740 received a grateful

reply from Swift's publisher, George Faulkner (Swift by this time was unable to reply himself), saying: "I have often the Favour of drinking your Health with Dr Swift, who is a great Admirer of yours, . . . and desired me to thank you for your kind Present, and to accept of his Service."⁵⁷ It is pleasant to think of the two most powerful satirists of the age, one in words and the other in images, thus acknowledging each other.